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Case Study 2
Management Seminar VII

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OCI/MEA/PGI

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Case Study: Promotion Policy in OCI

Background: Promotion policy for the Office of Current Intelligence (OCI) is described in general terms in the personnel handbook issued by the Directorate of Intelligence; a more specific statement of policy and procedure was issued to all OCI personnel by the D/OCI on 7 October 1974 in OCI Notice No. 20-295. The relevant portion of that notice states:

For promotions to grades 13, 14, and 15, the process will begin...with a promotion memo being written by the individual's division/staff chief and then sent to the Chief of the Administrative Staff. A week before the next regularly-scheduled Panel meeting that is to consider promotions to that particular grade (three times each year for promotions to GS-13) the Chief of the Administrative Staff will send copies of a biographic profile on each candidate and the supervisor's memorandum requesting his/her promotion to each Panel member. After the discussion of each candidate at the Panel meeting, the Director of Current Intelligence will make the final selection of those to be promoted.

Most OCI analysts and other personnel are vaguely aware that a vote is taken at the Panel session. They generally assume the voting results are controlling, with the D/OCI then formally ratifying the promotion decisions.

Situation

██████████ GS-12, was recently recommended for promotion by █████ the division chief, after a brief consultation with █████ branch chief.

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[redacted] division has no routinized way of handling the promotion process. When promotion time comes, the division chief holds rather desultory conversations--sometimes individually and sometimes collectively--with the branch chiefs about those who are eligible. There is little evidence of any rigorous thought being given to the matter on a division-wide basis; promotion standards are rather vague and intra-division ranking is not formalized. The division chief then selects one or more of the eligibles as candidates for promotion, prepares the memo of recommendation, and sends it forward--often without informing the branch chiefs and never informing the candidates of the action. (The division chief's theory is that it is not wise to raise expectations.)

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[redacted] entered on duty in 1966 via the career training program. He has served in the division throughout his career with the agency except for a brief interval. He was promoted to GS-12 in 1970. In late 1972 he resigned from OCI to take a job in the NIS program (then located in the [redacted] in what was [redacted] [then the] Office of Basic and Geographic Intelligence.

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When the NIS program was eliminated after about 6 months [redacted] STATINTL (he) was rehired by OCI and placed in his old division, although in a new branch, headed by [redacted] resignation from OCI in 1972 came about because of his disagreements that he had not received it belief that he deserved promotion and had not received it when he became eligible that year.

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[redacted] is regarded by the division and branch chiefs as a solid and dependable analyst--"a journeyman" is [redacted] description; he is a fast writer but not an exceptionally good one. He has a history PhD and is regarded as a STATINTL regional expert; he has proficiency in the dominant dominant in esoteric language of the area. [redacted] is regarded as a valuable resource person. He has been involved in various agency and office programs related to determining

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Outcome

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████████ was not promoted by the April 1975 Panel.

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When ██████████ (the branch chief) about the
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promotion results, the only information available to

~~the branch chief~~ ██████████ given to him in an offhand manner by ██████████ was

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that ██████████ had not received the GS-13. ██████████, very unhappy,
asked the branch chief to secure additional details about
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what had happened at the Panel.

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████████ he had been branch chief for only about
6 months--went to the division chief and told him that ██████████

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was again disgruntled. He asked whether there was
anything that he could pass on to ██████████ including whether
████████ might look forward to promotion at the next Panel.

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Cautioning ██████████ that what he had to say was for the
branch chief's ears only, ██████████ told him something about
the procedures. ~~at the Panel~~ The voting members of the

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panel are the D/OCI, DD/OCI, and the five division chiefs,
and several staff chiefs. After the D/OCI indicates the
number of promotions he feels he can make, the division
and staff chiefs nominate and speak on behalf of their
candidates. Each voter also has the biographic statement
and the nominator's original promotion recommendation
before him. The votes are then openly cast.

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████████ placed third ^{among} ~~out of~~ the 11 candidates put up--
four were to be promoted. The D/OCI told the group, however,
that he was promoting those ranking first, second, fourth,
and fifth. The D/OCI placed ██████████ ninth on his list,
suggesting it is unlikely that ██████████ will in the near term
receive a promotion. The division chief reported he could
not elicit any reason from the D/OCI, for his negative
reaction to ██████████

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Questions

A. Should [redacted] relate any part of this information about the Panel proceedings [redacted] How much information should be made available to personnel about a promotion process?

B. Is voting a rational technique in a promotion process? Can a division chief cast a meaningful vote in regard to analysts for other divisions?

C. Should the D/OCI make the promotion decisions? Should he be obligated to accept the Panel's ranking?